

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, May 12, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

O almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, we pray that in all the seasons of life we can have trust and confidence in Your word. In times of plenty, give us grateful hearts; in times of sadness or worry, grant us hope; in times of need, hear our petitions; in times of anxiety, give us serenity; in times of discouragement, grant us faith; and in times of loneliness may we have a full measure of Your love and Your grace. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. QUINN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate, by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 900. An act to enhance competition in the financial services industry by providing a prudential framework for the affiliation of banks, securities firms, insurance companies, and other financial service providers, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 105-292, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, appoints Michael K. Young, of Washington, D.C., to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, vice William Armstrong.

The message also announced that pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 105-186, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, appoints the Senator

from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) to the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, to fill a vacancy thereon.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 94-304, as amended by Public Law 99-7, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. HUTCHINSON) to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki).

CUBAN POLITICAL PRISONERS EVENT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 19, the members of this body will have an opportunity to hear the testimonials of former political prisoners and prisoners of conscience who have survived Castro's gulags.

For over 40 years, the brutal Castro regime has systematically violated the basic human rights and civil liberties of the Cuban people. During the 4 decades it has been in power, thousands of innocent people have been executed or subjected to beatings, torture or arbitrary detentions.

For some lucky enough to have survived, the opportunity to inform the international community about the Cuban reality has become a mission. Their stories are graphic, compelling and horrific examples of the oppressive, violent and diabolical nature of the Castro regime.

Next Wednesday, we will hear these firsthand accounts of the physical and psychological torture of those who are willing to risk life and limb for freedom, liberty and democracy for Cuba.

I invite all of my colleagues to meet some of Cuba's true heroes, the survivors of Castro's gulags, on Wednesday, May 19, at 12 p.m. in room 2200 in the Rayburn Building.

BIG TOBACCO MONEY SEEMS MORE IMPORTANT THAN OUR NATION'S KIDS

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, 5 million kids who are now under the age of 18 are likely to die from smoking-related illness. Decisive Federal action is need-

ed now to address the historically high levels of smoking among our Nation's children.

Yet, this Congress is on the verge of waiving the Federal Government's portion of the tobacco settlement monies to the States without ensuring that any of these funds be spent to protect our kids. We are simply closing our eyes to the number one preventable cause of death in America. That is unacceptable.

Frankly, I am not surprised. Big tobacco gave an astonishing \$4.5 million in soft money contributions to the Republican party during the 1997-1998 elections cycle, effectively killing the leading tobacco reform legislation.

The fact of the matter is that public health groups simply cannot compete with big tobacco when it comes to soft money contributions. The pro-tobacco language in the supplemental bill is just another example of what happens when we allow big money to talk louder than kids' lives on Capitol Hill.

CHINESE INFLUENCE FOR SALE TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN), and I think there are goals that all Members of this House share in terms of public health policy. But when the gentleman from Massachusetts starts talking about campaign finance, the gentleman from Massachusetts and many on that side of the aisle would do well to heed the testimony yesterday of one Johnny Chung and would do well to connect the dots because of the relationship of the People's Republic of China to the Clinton-Gore campaign in 1996.

Mr. Speaker, there may be those who smile wistfully, but I do not believe our national security is something to be toyed with and to fiddle around with while this Nation is in danger of burning.

The fact is we should stand up, remain vigilant, have the Cox committee report released and get to the bottom of Chinese influence for sale to the highest bidder, sadly, it seems at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

GUN SAFETY

(Mrs. JONES of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.